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February 2011

Dear Child Advocate,

Franklin County Children Services advocates for the safety, permanency and well-being of children and families. Read about our latest efforts in February's top 5 stories:

- [1. Executive Director Announces Retirement](#)
- [2. Outstanding Mentors and Youth Honored](#)
- [3. Parents Urged to Choose Your Partner Carefully](#)
- [4. Foster Son Saves A Life](#)
- [5. Black History Month Event Discusses Disproportionality](#)

Read more about each story below or click the link above.

Taking A Stand Against Abuse**Executive Director Announces Retirement**

Franklin County Children Services Executive Director Eric D. Fenner will be retiring effective April 8, 2011. He has served as agency director for the last four years and in various fields of public service for 32 years. Fenner has led the agency in many new initiatives to better engage families, enhance community partnerships and ensure permanency for children. The Franklin County

Children Services Board of Trustees will be conducting a nationwide search for his replacement.

Want More?

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Important Phone Numbers

24-Hour
Child Abuse Hotline:
614-229-7000

Foster, Adopt,
Volunteer:
614-341-6060

Outstanding Mentors and Youth Honored

In recognition of their commitment to provide guidance, consistency, and support to their matched youth, Mark Schroeder and Sally Wood were recently honored by the Mentoring Center of Central Ohio as outstanding mentors.



Mentor Sally Wood (right) with mentee Khadeza

Schroeder has been an active volunteer for almost 10 years, and has been matched with a total of three boys during this period. Wood has been working consistently with the same girl for the past seven years.

The Mentoring Center also recognized 16-year-old outstanding mentee Vicky who is an inspiring young lady that has overcome many challenges in her life, including living in foster care, dealing with her sister's murder, and having a physical limitation. Despite these challenges, her mentor states, "It seems like the more difficult Vicky's situation becomes, the more optimistic she is. She is an inspiration to me."

[To read more about these exceptional people in the winter edition of Accent on Kids, click here.](#)

Ways to Act Now!

Parents Urged to Choose Your Partner Carefully

Choosing a partner carefully is one of the most important decisions a parent can make because a child's safety is at stake.

Before leaving a new boyfriend or girlfriend alone with a child, the following are a few essential questions parents should ask themselves about their new partner:

- Does he or she show anger or impatience when your child cries or has a tantrum?



- Does he or she ridicule or call your child bad names?
- Does he or she think it's funny to scare your child?
- Does he or she exhibit controlling behavior or get physically aggressive with you?

If you answered yes to even one of these questions, your child might be at risk and should not be left alone with your partner.

You can act now by helping get the word out. [Click here for more Choose Your Partner Carefully information, printable literature, videos and photos.](#)

Children's Heroes

Foster Son Saves A Life

Dr. Johannes Christian is a local foster parent who has nurtured children in his home since 1972. Little did he know that his foster son Brian Rinear would one day save his life.



Brian Rinear, featured here on the John Walsh show, saved his foster father's life.

While driving down the highway in 2001, a rock that was thrown over a bridge by a teenager crashed through Christian's windshield, fracturing his skull and jaw, leaving him blind and disfigured. His foster son was able to disengage the cruise control and steer the car to safety. Although the scene was traumatic, Rinear then had the courage to call 9-1-1 and later reach members of Christian's family.

"This is a story of survival through pain and the endurance of a life-changing incident that will lead youth to know that they can triumph over tragedy," Christian said. He has donated 100 copies of his new book, *The Face of Forgiveness - A Memoir*, to Franklin County Children Services and he plans to donate more than 1,000 books across the state of Ohio in hopes of inspiring teenagers going through the foster care system. [Read more here in the winter edition of Accent on Kids.](#)

Black History Month Event Discusses Disproportionality

Dr. Michael Lindsey, a leading expert on the disproportionality of races in the juvenile justice system and child welfare, engaged Children Services staff in an insightful and

thought provoking discussion on the topic: Disproportionality 2011 - How Did We Get Here? The training explored many of the historical and societal factors that impact racial disparities in child welfare and universally. Dr. Lindsey also helped provide a foundation for openness and continued dialogue regarding disproportionality at FCCS.



Dr. Lindsey congratulated McKenna Hensley on her "I Have The Dream" speech.

Disproportionality is a national phenomenon with children and families of color involved in the child welfare system at rates that far exceed their relative proportion to the population. There are many causes of this disproportionality stemming from factors inside and outside of the child welfare system. Dr. Lindsey discussed possible strategies for bridging these divides stressing that unraveling the fabric of disproportionality will take a lot of work. "However, the benefit to the families and children the agency serves will be invaluable," he concluded.

Tips for Today

Handling Misbehavior



Every child misbehaves from time to time. When your child misbehaves, it is your job as a parent to respond to your child and teach appropriate behavior. To encourage good behavior - set a few clear rules, be consistent, be firm but fair, and be encouraging when

your child behaves well. To deal with misbehavior, try timeouts, tuning out (when your child is trying to provoke you), or removing privileges. Physical punishment is not a good idea because it teaches a child to use violence to solve problems. It may also lead to injury.

If you feel you are losing control, take a deep breath and count to 10. If you need further help, call Franklin County Children Services at 614-229-7000 or HandsOn Central Ohio at 2-1-1. [Click here for more frequently asked questions.](#)

Upcoming Events

February**February is Black History Month**

FCCS will celebrate Black History with activities throughout the month. For more information and events in Ohio, [click here](#).

Sat. Feb. 26 - Volunteer Movie Night

The Volunteer Services Advisory Committee would like to invite FCCS volunteers and their matched youth (13 & older) to movie night. For additional information, or to RSVP, call 275-2690 or email FCCSVolunteers@fcss.co.franklin.oh.us.

March**March is National Social Work Month**

Franklin County Children Services will host various events during the month of March to honor those who make a difference in the lives of thousands of children and families each year.

Sat. March 19 - Volunteer Ice Skating Event

This event is for FCCS volunteers and their matched youth and will be held at the Chiller Easton. For additional information, or to RSVP, call 275-2690 or email FCCSVolunteers@fcss.co.franklin.oh.us.

April**April is Child Abuse Prevention Month**

The agency invites you to participate in activities to raise awareness about child abuse.

Wed. April 13 - Child Abuse Prevention Breakfast

This annual event, held at the Confluence Park Restaurant at 7:30 a.m., highlights child abuse prevention and the accomplishments of social work professionals, client families, youth and community advocates. For more information, call (614) 275-2523.

Contact Information

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